TOPIC

FEMINITY VS FEMINISM IN THE SELECT NOVEL'S OF SHASHI DESHPANDE

A

SYNOPSIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A DEGREE

OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN THE

DEPARTMENT OF

ENGLISH

SUBMITTED TO

Approved & recommended for research

HOD
ENGLISH
YBN UNIVERSITY, RANCHI-10

YBN UNIVERSITY

RAJULATU, NAMKUM, RANCHI

JHARKHAND 834010 (INDIA)

July, Year 2022

Research Supevisor :-

Dr. Arti Gupta

Assistant Professor, H.O.D

Depatment Of English

Dr. Arti Gupta
Supervisor, Dept. of English
YBN University, Ranchi-834010

Sony Kumari

Research Scholar:-

Sony Kumari

Enrollment No.YBNU2001243

Depatment Of English

INDEX

SL.NO.	CONTENT	PAGE NO.
1.	INTRODUCTION	1-3
2.	LITERATURE REVIEW	4
3.	HYPOTHESIS	5
4.	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	5
5.	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	6
6.	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH	6
7.	MAIN BODY	7-9
8.	TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION OF RESEARCH WORK	10
9.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	11

INTRODUCTION

Femininity is a quality of traditionally thought to be in a typically womanly, girlish, or feminine way. In other words, femininity is a set of attributes, behaviors, and roles generally associated with girls and women.

Different cultures have different ideas of what femininity looks like. Femininity comes from the adjective feminine, "relating to women," from the Latin femina, "woman."

Moreover, Society has a particular idea and definition of exactly what femininity is, but this varies widely for individual women.

That is, femininity is socially constructed, but made up of both socially-defined and biologically-created factors. This makes it distinct from the definition of the biological female sex, as women, men, and transgender people can all exhibit feminine traits. Behavioral traits generally considered feminine include gentleness, empathy, and sensitivity, though traits associated with femininity vary depending on location and context, and include a variety of social and cultural factors. Femininity is a quality of traditionally thought to be in a typically womanly, girlish, or feminine way. In other words, femininity is a set of attributes, behaviors, and roles generally associated with girls and women.

Femininity describes a set attributes, behaviours, and roles related to women and girls. Femininity can be conceptualized as a social construct, and there is some evidence that some characteristics associated with femininity can be related to both biological and cultural characteristics.

Feminism isn't about making women stronger. Women are already strong, it's about changing the way the world perceives that strength.

The term "feminism" has been derived from the Latin word 'femina', meaning 'women' and was first used with regard to the issues of equality and womens rights Movements.

Feminism is focused on the battle for equity for women. Nevertheless, the battle for equivalent rights truly and politically underscores the value of women as they are and women are of equivalent human value in their own specific manner. In the expressions of Linda Gordon, 'Feminism is an investigation off women's subordination to make seenof how to transform it".

Feminism is a social and political movement that advocates for the rights of women on the grounds of equality of sexes. It does not deny the biological differences between the sexes but demands equality in opportunities. It covers everything from social and political to economic arenas. In fact, feminist campaigns have been a crucial part of history in women empowerment. The feminist campaigns of the twentieth century made the right to vote, public property, work and education possible.

Moreover, feminism constantly questions patriarchy and strives to renounce gender roles. It allows men to be whoever they wish to be without getting judged. It is not taboo for men to cry anymore because they must be allowed to express themselves freely.

Feminism refers to the belief in and advocacy for the political, economic, and social equality of women, particularly through organized activities on behalf of the rights and interests of women.

Feminism came in four waves, Feminism is one of the oldest movements in global history. There's no single definition, but feminism boils down to ending gender discrimination and bringing about gender equality. Within this goal, there are many types of feminism. Instead of describing them in isolation from each other, feminism can be divided into "waves."

Famous feminists and their Works, India, the place where goddesses are worshipped by almost everyone, has a very heartbreaking history when it comes to its behavior with women. The patriarchy has grown its roots so deep down that despite various movements by Indian feminists, women living in modern India still face many issues of discrimination.

In a patriarchal world where women have been traditionally silenced, dominated, and brutally treated, many females raised their voices to end this torture. A few of such feminists were:

Savitribai Phule (1831-1897): She was a brave Dalit woman who raised her voice against the cruelty of society towards women and lower castes. She started 17 schools for women and held many movements for women's right to education and against female infanticide. She also set up "Balhatya Pratibandhatmak Griha" to prevent female infanticides and campaigned against the killing of widows and pregnant rape victims.

Tarabai Shinde (1850-1910): She was a female activist who protested against the male patriarchy and caste discrimination. She wrote a famous book named "Stri Purush Tulana" (Disparities between men and women) wherein she defined the inherent patriarchy found in Hindu scriptures. Her views were concrete and controversial. She devoted her life to women empowerment and equality.

Ramabai Ranade: She was a well educated and thoughtful woman. According to her, every woman should be independent. She set up "Sewa Sadan" in Mumbai and Pune ,an institution that trained thousands of women to have various skills. She dedicated her life to make women self-reliant and financially independent.

Dr. Vina Mazumdar: She created a revolution when she started the most famous "twin movement", the movement supporting women studies and women activism. Through her research, she and her colleagues realised that there wasn't any widespread knowledge about lived experiences of unprivileged women, thus leading to the advent of the Centre for women's Development Studies(CWDS), in 1980. In 1982 she became a founding member of the Indian Association of Women's Studies(IAWS), which conducts national conferences to promote Women's Studies, even to this day.

These great feminists have created a major difference comparatively, and yet there are many wars to be fought for the equality and respect of women not just in India but all around the world.

Shashi Deshpande is an acclaimed Indian novelist. Her father was the famous Kannada playwright and novelist Shriranga. Shashi Deshpande's novels depict a social world of a great deal of complexity. The men and women in her novels share a common space and make a living together, journaling their lives in various age groups, classes, and gendered roles. Old traditions have been incorporated with the new, leading to unforeseen gaps and disruptions within the family. Women's ability to comprehend becomes questionable as the old ways of conducting themselves are no longer considered acceptable. The struggles become self-definition quests because it is impossible to relate to others with any degree of conviction unless one understands one's position within the community. An eminent novelist, Shashi Deshpande, has carved out a reputation as a writer with unique insight into the psychology of women. Shashi Deshpande depicts the struggles of women battling tradition and modernity in her novels. Undoubtedly, she is one of the most influential Indian women novelists of our time. Most of her novels can be classified as feminist works because they are about the problems women face in their daily lives and how they deal with them. The protagonists of her writing are usually female, and she paints contemporary portraits of contemporary dilemmas. By exploring the inner conflicts of a woman, she explores how she adjusts to circumstances that do not suit her. The author discusses how women in modern middle-class Indian society attempt to achieve a balance between tradition and modernity. Deshpande depicts the reality of women's lives within the existing social framework.

According to Deshpande's novels, western education awakens in the woman a desire for freedom and individuality. In a traditional society, this is resisted, which causes her to be alienated and dissatisfied. The marriage relationship has its share of overt and covert manifestations of oppression. Both men and women are socialized to accept the superiority of males. Despite how strange it may seem, the day-to-day strain on the domestic front is arguably the most substantial factor contributing to the suffering of an Indian woman. Several western-educated Indian readers have confirmed that Deshpande's protagonists' predicament is distinctively Indian. The current study makes use of Sashi Deshpande's novels, *Roots and Shadows* and *The Dark Holds No Terrors* to explore the themes of femininity and feminism.

Sashi Deshpande Major Contribution in Literary Fields are :

- The Binding Vine
- Matter of Time
- That Long Silence
- Dark Holds No Terrors

Basically, My Research work will be based on her two novels- The Dark Holds No Terrors and Roots & Shadows.

Literature Review

1. Roots and Shadows : The Bold Treatment of Unconventional Issues
Dr. Shuchi
IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science
Volume 21, Issue 2 , (Feb. 2016)
www.iosrjournals.org
The writer in this article found that the settlement of every affair, the fact of reconciliation enters in Indu's Mind. She realize that Jayant is her need and she is incomplete without him.

2. Shashi Deshpande's " Roots and Shadows" : Transformation of women in the modern Generation.

   Surender Allam
   International Journal of English language, literature and translation studies.
   Volume 3, Issue 2, 2016 (April – June)
   http://www.ijelr.in
   The novel ends with insights of reality of the place of women in modern generation. Indu asserts her individuality as a women and also as a partaker in the endless cycle of life. Indu symbolizes a modern women who is on the verge of transformation . In this article writer found of this

3. The Dark Hold No Terrors : A women searing for her identity.
   Dr. Bipin Chandra Uniyal
   International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities
   Volume III , Issue VI , August 2015
   The writer in this article found that Shashi Deshpande's women characters revolt against the Social taboos and old tradition. They struggle for their freedom, completeness and their identity. She successfully portrays a complex vision of compromised happiness and withered dreams of middle class women's life.

4. Shashi Deshpande's the Dark Holds No Terror ……
   A critical study of the Raised Voice towards the Voiceless Gender.

   Susmita Roy and Dr. Seeme Mahmood
   International Journal an Arts, Management and Humanities 6(1) : 24 -26 (2017)
   www.researchtrend.net
   In all these relationships, the women occupies the central stage and signifiacantly the narration shifts through her femine / feminist consciousness.
   Her novels reflect the lives of suffocated women in search of a refuge from suffering.
   In this article the writer found of this.

Hypothesis

I have some basic assumption in my mind with which I will direct my study.
This is stated as such :

Feminity Vs Feminism in the select Novels of Shashi Deshpande
For this research , I have taken her two novels namely – Roots and Shadows & The Dark Holds No Terrors.

Aims and Objectives

Shashi Deshpande presents a gallery of woman caught in the web of marital discord. The tradition and culture lead to the failure of successful lives in feminine characters. They are destined to suffer in a patriarchal society because the laws of society are meant to curb woman. However, I find that though she criticises society, Deshpande is optimistic with the feminist characters, who use their education and employment to fight and win in the end.

When we say that, the woman is not given a choice in the selection of man, life etc, one might be tempted to think that where there is choice for woman, things go well? Shashi Deshpande has brought forth love marriages in the case of Indu & Saru which turn out to be failures. Therefore, I find, it is not the institution of marriage that is bad, rather feminity and feminism (tradition and modernity) that has vitiated the holy land of conjugal life. Therefore, my research thesis will be directed with the basic aim of analyzing Feminity vs Feminism.

The objectives of the research are as follows:-

1) To analyse Feminity & Patriarchy as hindrance towards success of women.

2) To analyse women predicament in both novels- 'Roots & Shadows' and 'Dark Holds No Terror'.

3) To analyse conflict and identity as backdrop behind feminism.

Research Methodology

The Research Methodology that I will use for my research paper will be based on secondary sources.

The Primary Sources for my research work is the book by Shashi's Deshpande – "Roots and Shadows" , and "The Dark Hold No Terrors".

The Seconary sources will be from , Journals, Websites , Articles etc.

Significance Of Research

Shashi Deshpande through her novels empowers women and motivates them to be courageous in different situations of their life. Feminity and feminism though entirely different are two very important attributes that find a perfect manifestation in the female characters of Deshpande. The India women folk can easily correlate with all the female characters created by the novelist. Their predicament somehow or the other finds a striking resemblance to the marital excursion of Deshpande's female characters. Thus her novels are very much relevant to the contemporary times, with the women readers inculcating a very keen interest in the saga that Deshpande narrates in her novels.

However, we all know that feminity fight against patriarchal society.But, I find they are also suppressed by feminity. That is, feminism has to stand against both patriarchy and feminity. Therefore, my research work will be useful to those who wants to analyse the theme from different angle. They will gain the insight that how feminism is not only fighting against the age old prejudiced partriarchal society but also feminity.

Main Body

Marriage is the most powerful means that society uses to ensure female subjugation and the institution of marriage is cleverly camouflaged by sanctity only to ensure male domination and to prevent any questioning by women. Martial relationships have been the central theme of most novels by Indian women writers. For those with a feminist stance, the emphasis is not on the forces that combine to degrade the relationship into a farce. I find Shashi Deshpande shows marriage as a patriarchial institution enslaving women to a lifetime of male domination. While revealing the travails of the educated married women in the contemporary Indian society; Deshpande wants to expose the educated men who are snobs and chauvinistic.

I believe, submission of female is ensured with the help of socialization that begins in early childhood and extends well into adolescence and adulthood. Girls are trained to think, speak, dress and behave in such a way as to give preference to the males around them. Stereotypes of mythical figures like Sita, Savitri , Draupadi etc are given to them to emulate. However, I find, when they grow and get educated, their new sense of identity and equality clash with the internalized sense of submission and docility. Consequently, when they get married later, their marriages threaten to fail. It is this tension between feminity and feminism; in other words tradition and modernity that I will try to find out by my research based on the two novels of the prolific novelist Shashi Deshpande.

The Dark Holds No Terrors tells the story of a well-educated, economically independent woman who searches for her identity by uncovering the dormant strength within every individual. The book recounts the story of Sarita and her relationship with her parents and her husband, along with her agonizing search for herself. The novel tells the story of a marriage on the brink of dissolution and of a woman who has been forced to deal with the issues of gender from a young age. The testimony of Shashi Deshpande, however, demonstrates how in the institution of marriage, and economically independent woman is still bound in shackles and must forever live in fear of hurting the ego of her husband. In light of the shattered ego of the male, it is easy to identify the consequences. In her father's house, Saru dwells on this for a considerable amount of time and tries to objectively analyse her own share of responsibility for the implosion of the marriage. Saru's tragic realization is that women must always remain a step behind their husbands. Indu, the character in Roots and Shadows who has considerable expertise in resolving tricky problems such as love, sex, marriage, settlement, individuality, and dealing with the realities of human relations, is often seen as akin to Sarita, who yearns to express their feelings in their writings. She lacks much freedom due to the presence of 'others' in her life, so she remains all alone, which reminds us of her "loneliness of hostel life." Indu was brought up in a joint family where she was taught to be dutiful, meek, meek and unquestioning. Indu is an educated woman of Indian heritage who has established her own means of livelihood. Her conflicted feelings between custom and patriarchy lead her to rebel against the rules and marry Jayant, whom she loves, when she is eighteen years old. In the years following her marriage, her life has been marked by dishonesty and deception.

The Roots And Shadows story story revolves around the female protagonist Indu and uses the first person narrative. The story foregrounds the dynamics in an Indian, Brahmin, joint family and all its conflicts, compromises and peculiarities.

Indu's mother dies at childbirth and his father Govind, a photographer, leaves her in the care of his old aunt, Akka and his brother, Kaka (for Indu, real name Anant) who live in their ancestral home.

Akka is the matriarch and rules the house with a whip. Apart from Anant and Govind, there is Atya (real name the Narmada, widowed sister), Sunanda (sister) and two more brothers (Madhav and Vinayak) with their wives and kids.

Indu grows up as a rebellious and pugnacious kid who wants to do things according to her fancy and understanding. She finally succeeds in her endeavour when she leaves the house at age of 18 and later marries a man of his own choice, Jayant.

She works as a writer in a magazine but wishes to take up a different form of writing which would satiate the novelist inside of her. She is a doting wife and almost as dutiful and self-effacing as the domesticated housewives she always resented.

She hides her dependence on Jayant and the hypocrisy of her emotions and actions builds a stream of angst and guilt inside of her.

At the age of 29, she returns to her family house as Akka is on her deathbed. The fact the two had not spoken for 10 years and never really saw eye to eye, Indu is surprised when she learns that Akka wants to bequeath all her property and wealth to her.

She hides the information from the rest of the family up until her final rites when the probate lawyer, Shayamarao reads Akka's will to the entire family. They all are shocked to see that Indu, a familial pariah, was given everything.

Indu's cousin Padmini or Mini is supposed to get married and Akka promised to pay for it. So, Indu feels obligated to honour the said promise. As for the house, apart from Kaka and Atya, everyone wants it to be sold and receive their own share of the spoils.

All this while, Indu is distressed about her relationship with Jayant as he restricts her attachment with her to some placid and dispassionate letters. In her desperation, she even commits adultery with one of her cousins and close friend Naren who is the only grandson of the Old Uncle (cousin of Akka).

Naren is a self-indulgent and carefree vagabond who was never accepted by the family. He was orphaned in childhood and only has his grandfather to call his own. In the end, Naren succumbs to his 'private devils' and commits suicide.

The family is distraught over the tragedy especially the Old Uncle (his grandfather) and Indu. She even learns about the tragic life story of Akka as a 12-year-old bride, abusive marriage, her husband's concubine and widowhood.

She realizes her lack of knowledge and will to understand Akka and her rules bred their asperity toward each other. Shaken by Naren's death but unaffected by her own foibles, Indu decides to discharge the responsibility Akka had loaded on her shoulders.

She decides to fund Mini's marriage and to sell the house (and give everyone their share). She also decides to return to Jayant, her husband, and confess her infidelity.

She hopes that their relationship can withstand the trial of such 'scorching honesty' and even if it doesn't she would find peace in the confession of her sin.

I find the fighting characters (Feminist) are the most successful women that Shashi Deshpande has presented. She presents women who fight unto the last, defying the odds and emerge victorious in spite of taking severe blows. Many of them are badly mutilated and mauled but at the end declare the ultimate value of life notwithstanding the pain they had to take. Saritha and Indu belong to this category....

Tentative Chapterization of Research Work

Chapter I : Introduction

Chapter II : Shashi Deshpande- Life and Works

3. Feminity : Inner Courtyard

4.Feminism : Outer Courtyard

5.Conclusion

Bibliography

Bibliography

Primary Sources

1. Deshpande, Shashi (1980), The Dark Holds No Terrors, Penguin Books, New India
2. Deshpande, Shashi (1983), Roots and Shadows, Disha Books, New Delhi.

Secondary Sources

1. Dr. C.V.Ramya (2020), Asst. Professor, Department of English , ISSN 1930-2940 Vol.20:7 July 2020on " Saru in Shashi Deshpande's The Dark Holds No Terrors".

2. Madhurima, R.P. (2012). Shashi Deshpande's Roots and Shadows: Articulation of Feminine Voice.

3. New Delhi : Pen Crafts International Publications.

4. Mahida, C. (2011). The Corrupt Urban Culture in Shobha De's sisters. New Delhi: Laxmi Bookspublications.

5. Mohan Indira JMJ, Shashi Deshpande : A Critical Spectrum, New Delhi, Aadhayana publish and distributors, 2006.

6. Sharma Siddhartha, Shashi Deshpande's Novels: A Feminist study, New Delhi, Atlantic publishers and distributors, 2005.

7. Singh Jyothi, Indian Women Novelists: Feminist Physiological study, Jaipur, Rawat Publications, 2007.

8. Srinivas, O. (2009): The Image of New Women in Shobha De's Novel Socialite Evenings. New Delhi:Pen Crafts Publications.

9. Susmita Roy (2017), International Journal o Arts, Management and Humanities 6(1): pp. 24-26 (2017), (Received 06 March, 2017, Accepted 25 May, 2017), on " Shashi Deshpande's the Dark Holds No Terror – a Critical Study of Raised Voice towards the Voiceless Gender".